

By the Way—

"How shall I give you an instance of the sort of thing we are trying to do? It is a day of such small things, not worth writing about, if it were not that such as these are the little touches that go to build up character. I say, for example, 'Georgie, you mustn't play with the ribbons' (that tie up the curtains). He looks up, wise and sweet as a cherub; and I think the thing is done with, and go on with my work. A few minutes later I look up, and behold! George has made head-gear and sash of the broad ribbons, and looks—well, I must not say how! A moment's pride in him, and then—I felt hot. I believe so strongly that it is mostly their parents' fault when children do wrong that I was vexed to have allowed George in disobedience, small as the thing was.

"What next? Well, looking as sad as I really felt, I took George to the window. 'Take off the ribbons!' which he did quietly, without rumpling them. 'Lay one down beside each curtain!' He did so—much effort at smoothing and laying straight. 'George must not stay in the drawing-room (ringing for nurse); and, oh, Georgie, you touched the ribbons when Mother said "Don't!"' It was no effort to look sad, because I felt so, and Georgie cried sadly and softly as he went out.

"It is the absoluteness of 'don't' and 'do' which we want to get into the children from the first; and, therefore, we are careful not to worry them with many rules, and we allow some pranks that other parents would put down as naughty. But we have made this a binding rule, that a command must be obeyed without question, evasion, or even pause. You don't know what a restraint this is upon ourselves. Knowing that we shall certainly have to get the thing done, we are very careful how we throw about 'do' and 'don't.'

"George has attempted no forbidden pranks since. You don't know how that child's sunny sweetness grows on us.

H. M. T.

You find the term *prévenant*, *prévenance*, constantly used in French society and in French literature. What does it signify? Perhaps some quality possessed by our neighbours across the Channel, and in which we insular folk are deficient?

"She is *toujours prévenant*," I once heard said of a young lady in a French household. The speaker meant that she was carefully attentive to other people's wishes, was ready to lay down her book and open the door for the grandmother, whose stick and tottering footsteps resounded in the corridor; that she carefully studied her visitors' comfort, placed them in the best seats, avoided mentioning what she anticipated might annoy them, brought forward topics which she foresaw must interest them.

Her *prévenance* continually led this girl to smooth the way for others, to be kind to young and old, to forget herself and to think of her neighbours, in a word—to be truly polite. And so, in the good sense of the word, she was an important member of the family, one to be depended upon to fulfil her social duties; not a mere cipher, as some girls are, who must be fed, dressed, taught, amused, occupied, and—sighed over—by their parents and guardians.

The origin of the word *prévenant* is to be sought for in the Latin—*prevenire*, to anticipate. "To anticipate kindly" is the shade of meaning the French connect with it; and the same idea lingers on in our English language in the sweetly-familiar quaint Church collect which begins "Prevent us, O Lord, in all our doings."

Prévenance is a good word—one of the richest treasures the French language contains; for it implies a fine and noble grace of character, only possessed by an intelligent, highly-cultured, and amiable people.

Is not *prévenance* a word to be commended to the attention of English mothers?

MARY CAUMONT.

There is a pleasing charm in the history of that French youth from Dauphiné, who "never rose above the rank of a simple captain," and whose name, nevertheless, comes down through three centuries as the knight "*Sans peur et sans reproche*," whose memory is immortalised by a noble monument in the eloquent proverb of the Spaniards' "*Muchos Sriesnes y*

pocos Bayardos," meaning, "There are many gray horses, but few Bayard, or bay ones."

We do not read that his was a remarkable military career. He was a brave soldier, but there have always been many brave men in the world. His fame rests altogether on his integrity, gentleness, generosity, and singlemindedness, and it is well said that the reign of Francis the First was more ennobled by the virtues of this one man than by all the King's victories.

Where learnt the youth those priceless lessons which carried him safely over the stormy sea of social life, when wickedness, cruelty, and rapine were the order of the day, by heeding which he kept a name unsullied when almost every name was linked with vice, which gave him courage to die, to use his own words, "in the service of his country?"

Here are the things which his mother commanded him:—
"To love God above all things, and recommend himself night and morning to God, and serve Him without offending Him in any way if it might be possible. To be courteous to all men, casting away pride, neither to slander nor lie, nor be a tale-bearer, and to be temperate and loyal, to be charitable, and share with the poor whatever gifts God should bestow on him."

It is by training up her son in counsels like these that a woman becomes the mother of a Chevalier Bayard.

I. K. RITCHIE.

Prizes.

1.—A Prize of *Five Guineas* will be awarded for the best story dealing (suggestively) with the subject of "Growing-up Daughters,"—5000 words. MSS. should be sent to the Publishers by June 16th. The story will be published in the July or August number. The prize lapses should no story good enough for publication be sent in. No limit of age.

2.—A Prize of *One Guinea* for the best "Memoir of a Child fourteen months old," defining, so far as possible, the child's knowledge and powers at that age. Conditions as for No. 1.

3.—A Prize of *Ten Shillings* for the best "Out of Doors Diary, dating from March 18th to April 18th." Limit of age, seventeen. Other conditions as for No. 1.

Directions will appear in the April number for sending in the "Art" competitions, in the May number, for the "Flower" competitions, proposed last month.

Books.

"Omnibus in rebus requiem quaesivi sed non inveni nisi en hoexkens ende boexkens."—THOMAS KEMPIS.

"I have sought for rest everywhere but I have found it not, save in a little nook, and in a little book." And one or two of my "little books" are on my table; books in paper covers, written by unknown people, published in outlandish places, but still affording excellent material for me when I have an hour or two to make entries in my Common Place Book. I wonder how many mothers who can read German know of "Kinderlieder und Kinderspiele aus dem Vogtlande" (possibly it may cost 6d.), which is dedicated "dem treuen Eltern," and which begins with this. "There is a story of an Emperor who would decide what words are first spoken by a child; so he forbade the nurses to speak to the children in their charge or to utter a word in their presence. 'But,' says the chronicler, 'the children must die, for if they are not sung to sleep with lullabies, the unnatural stillness will be unbearable to them.'" This is a charming beginning, and the nursery songs are many and varied. Here are a few specimens:—

Ei du lieber heilger Christ,
Komm nur nicht wenn's finster ist,
Komm in hellen Mondenschein,
Wirf nur Nüss und Aepfel rein.

And isn't this a parallel to "Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, bless the bed that I lie on?"

Ich will heyndt schlaffen gehen,
Zwölff Engel mit mir gehen,
Zwen zum haupten, zwen zum seitten, zwen zum füssen,
Zwen die mich decken, zwen die mich wecken,
Zwen die mich weisen, zu dem hymnischen Paradeyse.

Why should not some of these rhymes (not the dialect ones, of course) be used in teaching German to little children?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Petrus Paulus hat geschrieben,
Einen Brief nach Paris,
Er soll holen drei Pistolen,
Eine für dich, eine für mich, eine für Bruder Heinerich.

Have we anything so simple as this in English?